

THE NEED OF LEGISLATION

THE official report of David Haughts, forester in the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, was made public by Commissioner Wray Taylor yesterday. It deals almost entirely with his investigations into the forest fires in the district of Hamakua, Hawaii, and is published in full as follows:

Honolulu, H. T., Aug. 27, 1901.
Wray Taylor, Esq., Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry.

Sir:—I have the honor to submit to you the following report of my investigations into the destruction of the forest by fire and other matters connected with your department in the district of Hamakua, Hawaii. The fire, which is now raging in the forest and doing an enormous amount of damage, was started by a native, who, in the act of burning brush on his kuleana, allowed the fire to spread into the forest adjoining his land. This fire, I am told, started on the 3rd of July, and has continued with more or less vigor according to the rise and fall of the wind, since that time; and on the day I left the island (Aug. 25) it was burning furiously. On August 17th, I visited the burned district along with Albert Horner of Kukulaui plantation. We examined part of the tract destroyed, but could not, at that time, make a thorough examination of the whole tract owing to the dangerous condition of same. The large roots of trees and decayed trunks, some of them entirely covered with a thin layer of soil and still smoldering, are to be found all over the tract and without any warning, one is apt to step into one of those pits left vacant by the burning of the wood and get badly burned by the red hot ashes. Several of Mr. Horner's men have got burned in this way. I will now lay before you a conservative estimate of the damage done to the forest up to the time of my visit.

The trees on the section destroyed were principally koa, kukui, ohia-hia and ohia-lehua.

Owing to the great amount of dead forms and underbrush which is the food of fires and the intense heat caused by the burning of such, a very small percentage of the trees will survive, the greater part of them are, in fact, burned to ashes. We estimated that about 2,000 acres had been covered by the fire up to August 17th, the day on which we visited the burned district. Our estimate of the amount of timber per acre was about seventy cords. This fire could probably be headed off, but it would require a great many men and it would cost a large sum of money to do the work. The only way the fire could be checked would be to cut a space through the forest about fifty yards broad, and carefully burn up all brush and then back fire. This space would probably have to be run through the forest for five or six miles, and continual watching would have to be done in case of sparks flying over and starting again on the other side. The fire has got a big hold and it will require great energy and a large number of men to stamp it out. The section of forest destroyed includes private lands and leased government lands.

On the morning of August 20th, Albert Horner telephoned to me at Kukulaui where I was then staying, and informed me that the fire was approaching fifty acres of government forest land and the Kamehameha and Paaulo homesteads, and asked if the government could not assist in trying to head off the fire. I told Mr. Horner that I did not think there was any appropriation to draw from for such work, but I would communicate with Governor Dole in regard to the matter. The Governor had left the Volcano House that morning, and was on his way to Hilo. The following morning I communicated with the Governor, who was then in Hilo. In reply, the Governor said that the plantation managers would have to try to fight the fire out themselves, and rely on the government to do the right thing by them. I informed Mr. Horner at once of the Governor's reply. Since then and up to the time I left the island, Mr. Horner and Mr. Lydgate have had gangs of men night and day trying to fight the fire, and on the evening I left was informed that Mr. Horner had all his plantation hands at work trying to check it.

In an interview with J. M. Horner, this gentleman complained about the indiscriminate burning of brush by settlers and by their carelessness or ignorance, allowing the fire to spread into the forest or their neighbor's property and ravage large tracts of land, thereby destroying much valuable property.

Legislation is undoubtedly greatly needed in the dry districts of different parts of the Islands to abate the evils caused by these brush fires. It would be advisable to prohibit all fires on lands, but without delay an end should be put to the system whereby any person can, at any time, without impunity, set fire to dry grass and brush, and so produce a conflagration that may and often does cause great injury and loss to his neighbors' property, and that certainly endangers the prosperity of the country. Although brush fires need not altogether be prohibited, they should not be allowed to be set in very dry seasons, as they are then exceedingly dangerous, and at other times they should be regulated so that the evils that I have brought to your notice may be mitigated if not entirely abolished.

The Kukulaui plantation has suffered severely from this fire, in addition to the burning of forest immediately mauka of the lands. The plantation has lost about 200 acres of cane, and Mr. Horner informed me that it would cost the plantation over \$5,000 for labor alone in trying to subdue the fires up to August 17th.

As regards the replanting of the burned district, should the Governor decide to retain the government portion of it as a forest reservation, the first thing would be the erecting of a fence around the reserve so that stray animals may not trample down and destroy the roots, shoots and seedlings that may spring up. I would advise that a visit be made again to the district in about seven or eight months, and should rains come before that time, I have no doubt that here and there on the tract roots, shoots and seedlings will spring up, then an estimate can be made of the amount of plants required to fill the blanks. Several of the acacia will grow well on the tract, also Casuarinas, Grevilleas and Eugenas.

After visiting the burned district we visited the coffee plantations, belonging to Mr. Horner and the Louissou Brothers. The coffee on both plantations is looking exceedingly well and has every appearance of a heavy crop. Along with Mr. Louissou, I went over the greater part of his plantation. This is a model plantation, and I would advise people who may be interested in coffee or contemplating going into small farming, to first visit the Louissou Brothers plantation.

Several of the homesteaders in that section complain of the want of roads leading to their homes and from what

COMMERCIAL.

THE stock brokers seem to be doing all their business off the board, for the records of the week are almost entirely of sales between boards. The feature of the week has been the drop of Oahu from 130 to sales reported yesterday at 125. As is the case with other shares there seems to be no reason for this, as the plantation is doing well as any other. The Ewa shares, as usual, took the center of the stage and held it all the week, advancing under consistent buying from 24.50 to 24.75. The total transactions in this stock reach into the hundreds of shares, and the feeling is fairly strong.

Waialua also sold well at 70, and there were several of the dividend paying stocks which were traded in at figures about the same as the last week. The assessables fell off under the stress of \$3 assessment calls, but there were not any large offerings. The list remains almost the same with the exception of the stock of the Hawaiian Telephone Company, which is being sold, and the lack of buying orders seems to be destined to keep the trading slow for some time to come. The bond market is strong, the demand being for government and railroad bonds, and the prices being those of last week.

There were few buying orders brought by the steamer, and these were outnumbered by the selling advices. This lack of support from the Coast has not been of any assistance to the local market, and the outlook is that the stocks which are most traded in will go lower. There seems little chance to keep Honolulu from a further softening, according to advices, and the stock here may feel the sympathy which usually is encountered.

The real estate market is at a standstill, there being no big sales to record. There has been little doing even in small house lots and the outlook is only little more than fair. There have been fewer inquiries, though the new additions report requests for single lots, no sales having been made. The few small reports are of little pieces, and cannot be taken as a criterion of the state of the market, which according to the largest dealers, is now in absolute sympathy with the stocks.

There is still some talk of filling in operations on the Waikiki lands of the various estates, but this has not got to the point of any concrete proposition. As this matter now stands there seems to be nothing but the offer made by Col. George W. Stone, while here last year, to do the work on a basis of 35 cents per yard, but better prices are expected by the owners. The Bishop Estate has laid out on Waikiki, through the Hawaiian Telephone Company, a large tract of land adjoining the McCully tract, but there has not been a stake driven as yet. In this addition the streets conform to the plan adopted by the projectors of the McCully tract.

Building goes on rapidly, ground being broken for four new structures during the past two weeks. The latest of these is the Auld block, a small series of stores, the building being only one story in height, at the corner of Beretania and Emma streets. This contract has been let to Contractor Smith, and the work will be pushed to early completion. The stores have all been let, and there will be no time elapse between the finishing of the building and its occupation.

The widening of Beretania street, to accord with the width beyond Fort, Waikikiward, has been commenced between Nuuanu street and the stream. The new bridge is ready and open for traffic, and the street when completed will afford a new route of communication between the upper part of the city and Kailua. The bridge building, for the widening of the street, has been excavated, will be constructed on the line established for the thoroughfare, and will fix the limits for the buildings which must go up on the block in the near future.

Among the new contracts which have been let is one for an office and sales building which the Honolulu Iron Works will erect at the end of Merchant street, at the corner of Nuuanu and Marine streets. This building will be of two stories, the front ornamented with terra cotta, and the interior finished for a series of offices above, and the salesroom for the different departments below. The contract price is about \$12,000, and the builder if John F. Bowler. Another new structure which will be an ornament to the lower portion of the city, will be the new warehouses of Lowers & Cooke, which will be erected at a cost of about \$12,000. The plans were by Swain.

Within the week the plans for the Waitey building, on King street, adjoining the Metropolitan Meat Company, will be ready for bidders. This building will be of four stories high, and for the present only two stories will be erected. The bids will be for that portion of the structure, and the walls will be carried up so that the upper portion may be added at any time.

Plans for the Hall building will be ready soon. This will be a combination construction building, of iron and wood, and while not thoroughly fire-proof, it will be at the most a slow combustion structure. There were fears that the shortage of general supplies would reach a famine stage, but the reports of the sailing of the bark Olympic, with full cargo, has allayed all dread of such an outcome. There will be for some time a shortage of feed supplies, as the markets on the Coast are not too well stocked.

C. H. Snyder, the Honolulu representative of Milliken Brothers, of New York, who are now supplying the structural steel work for the six-story Young building, and who have erected a large number of steel sugar mills in the Hawaiian Islands, takes occasion to the statement yesterday that the fire which destroyed the Hall building "demonstrated that the iron columns were warped out of shape, while the wooden ones were simply charred and stood the strain better than the heavier columns." He is of the opinion that this statement is misleading. He said yesterday to an Advertiser reporter:

"It is not surprising that the Hall building was so completely destroyed, and that the few iron columns contained therein were damaged, as the building was in no sense of the word a fire-proof one. The beams and columns were not even protected from the action of the fire by fire-proofing, as they would have been in a strictly fire-proof structure."

"Of course if a building is almost entirely constructed of inflammable material with very little iron in it is quite possible that the iron might be bent and warped by the action of the fire, but on the contrary if the building was constructed of refractory material, such as terra cotta, concrete, brick, etc., there would not be sufficient food for the flames to affect the iron frame materially, unless, of course, there was a large stock of a very inflammable nature. Even with a stock of very inflammable material the modern type of fire-proof structure would not be seriously damaged if the contents of any portion of the building were to be entirely consumed."

"The millions of dollars invested annually in fire-proof buildings in all the large cities of the United States proves conclusively the value of fire-proof structures."

I saw there is good grounds for complaint.

Along with Mr. Forbes of Kukulaui, I visited the cinchona forest planted by him about twelve years ago. The trees are now from twenty to thirty feet high, and in a healthy condition. On the same tract, oranges, limes, blackberries, raspberries and coffee are also to be found, and looking over Mr. Forbes' land, he contemplates planting up the vacant places in the natural forest with good forest trees.

In concluding, I will take this opportunity of thanking the following gentlemen for courtesies received at their hands during my visit to Hamakua: David Forbes of Kukulaui; Albert Horner of Kukulaui; the Louissou Brothers, and others.

Respectfully submitted,
DAVID HAUGHTS,
Forester.

MURPHY AT WAIALUA

Francis Murphy and Franklin Austin, of the F. M. T. C. A., returned yesterday from a trip to Ewa plantation and Waialua. They went down the railroad as guests of Mr. B. F. Dillingham, who suggested that Mr. Murphy visit the plantations and see the managers of these two important places before laying out the work for plantations proposed by the association.

Mr. Murphy said: "We were very much interested in the suggestion, and the kind offer of transportation over his railroad. This is a splendid island and don't you forget it. God Almighty made it for himself. These are beautiful mountains you have here—wonderful lights and shadows—the finest in the world. I can tell you, and I have traveled a good bit. I am afraid my wife will want to stay here for good when she comes. This is a wonderful industry you have here."

"I saw Mr. Renton and Mr. Goodale. Fine fellows, both of them, and they wanted Brother Murphy to come down and speak to the men—bless them. I told them I was here to do some good if I could, and I hoped they would make use of me. They have got a fine park at Ewa, and a beautiful social hall in it, and a church, too, and fine lawn tennis grounds, where the young people were enjoying themselves."

"Mr. Goodale is going to prepare a place for me to speak, and he is going to run special trains to the outlying stations to bring the men in. They

MR. REYNOLDS ON COFFEE

Thinks That the Army and Navy Department Have No Experts.

Editor Advertiser: A telegram appearing in your issue of the 26th certainly calls for some reply by some one who takes any interest in those industries which help in their own quiet way to make and build up countries up.

I refer to the strength of Hawaiian coffee as adjudicated upon by the Army and Navy Departments!

In the first place I object to our Governor's name being mixed up with it at all, because I know that he knows the difference between coffee and what is called coffee.

In the next place it is too funny to imagine that anyone belonging to the Army and Navy Departments could possibly form any opinion about coffee.

You ask me why? My answer is this: Coffee, with us, is usually had at 5 a. m. to brace up, and after 6 p. m., to finish up—sometimes entre nous.

You may now ask me what I am driving at, and I will simply ask you to find me a man in the whole War or Navy Department who could or would dare form any opinion as to Hawaiian or any other coffee, either before or after those hours.

I just want a photograph of that fellow, whether it be busting Young or any other back number. It is a pretty serious thing to attack at one blow an industry which made Oahu a possibility and Oahu Plantation a fact! Who is it with an axe to grind? To illustrate, I will tell you a funny little story about a certain professor who in his peregrinations, stopped one day at Kahuku—by the bye, Kahuku is only a little bit of a place on Oahu, just as large as three islands of Lanai—all fee simple and not any strings on it. The usual habits of this little place is coffee at 5 a. m. The professor was dead drunk on Kona coffee. He ventured the opinion he could tell it anywhere—of course he was supplied, and drank his fill, while my old friend the Colonel took his quietly and said nothing, except talked to me with his eyes. After coffee and smoke, a walk was in order, and dropping down a palm of 40 feet by easy grades, we landed in coffee trees. From these trees the Chinese servant was picking the fruit. The Colonel quietly turned to the learned professor and assured him that that was where his Kona coffee grew, viz., in Kau.

Now while this professor story is really a fact, the most important point to be arrived at is: do these Army and Navy experts KNOW a cup of coffee when they either see or drink it? Uncle Sam has taken a proposition in hand and he must protect it, and if his children cannot drink his own coffee, it is about time to call a halt. And further, while we all of us realize the importance of our largest industry, every possible care must be taken of our smaller ones, and a sweeping assertion made by persons claiming authority on such matters, ought to carry with it the reasons and grounds for such statements, so that we who are interested may at least be able to correct any faults which may exist.

W. F. REYNOLDS.

Review of Territorial Militia.

The Territorial militia will be reviewed by Governor Dole and General J. C. Breckenridge Monday morning. The regiment will be paraded without music, but will be put through a drill to give to the Inspector General of the United States forces a chance to see what the local National Guard can do. Governor Dole will have his staff with him and there will be in the party of the Inspector General several regular army officers who are now in the city. The time of the parade and drill will be so arranged that immediately it is over the Labor Day parade will pass before the reviewing stand.

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